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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 001791

SIPDIS

STATE/AF FOR NEULING

AID FOR DCHA/OFDA FOR PRATT, KHANDAGLE,  
HALMRAST-SANCHEZ, GOTTLIEB  
DCHA/FFP FOR LANDIS CRUMBLY, MUTAMBA,  
PETERSEN, WELLER  
AFR/SA FOR FLEURET, COPSON, BAKER, MACNAIRN  
BRUSSELS FOR LERNER  
PRETORIA FOR DISKIN, HALE, SINK  
NAIROBI FOR SMITH, BROWN  
MASERU FOR AMB LOFTIS  
GABORONE FOR CASHION, BROWN  
ROME FOR FODAG FOR GAST

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EAID PREL US ZI

SUBJECT: Zimbabwe Emergency: Ambassador's Declaration  
for FY05 Revalidation of Continuing Emergency

Ref: (A) Harare 001594 (B) Harare 1734 (C) Harare  
001139; (D) Harare 000768

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Summary  
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¶1. The Ambassador has determined that the complex political, economic, social and humanitarian crisis facing Zimbabwe is of sufficient magnitude to warrant continued USG emergency assistance, and therefore requests continued assistance through USAID, including USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance.

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Background  
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¶2. USG humanitarian assistance for the complex crisis in Zimbabwe has totaled over \$295 million from the USAID/DCHA Office of Food for Peace (FFP), and \$16 million from the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) since 2002.

¶3. Although the Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) acknowledges the humanitarian needs highlighted in the UN Consolidated Appeal (CAP) for CY 2004, at the request of the central government, the UN will not launch a formal CAP for Zimbabwe for 2005. However, local and district authorities have publicly and privately expressed growing concern over the continued humanitarian needs among people in their areas.

¶3. Preparations for up-coming parliamentary elections, scheduled for March 2005, have created a highly charged political environment. Mounting interference from government, increasingly limited humanitarian access to sensitive populations, and an elevated threat of political violence and intimidation are expected. These factors are likely to further contribute to the increased vulnerability of some populations and their need for humanitarian assistance.

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The Complex Humanitarian Crisis  
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¶4. Zimbabweans are caught in a downward spiral of poverty, food insecurity, HIV/AIDS and natural resources degradation caused largely by counter productive macroeconomic and structural policies, distorting government controls, the disorderly implementation of the GOZ fast-track land reform program and general collapse of the rule of law. The sharp economic decline and high inflation in Zimbabwe are having dire consequences for the country's population, notably rising unemployment, the rapid deterioration of social indicators and decreased purchasing power. The invasive and debilitating effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Zimbabwe intensify the current humanitarian crisis.

¶5. The GOZ continues to implement the land reform program, with the impact being increasing numbers of internally displaced people (IDPs), mostly ex-commercial farmworkers. Recently, even the "A1" farmers, small or subsistence farmers or war veterans who were allowed to settle on farms taken over from former commercial farmers, have themselves been evicted from the land in order to make those farms available for those more politically connected (Ref: A and B).

16. The food crisis in Zimbabwe, exacerbated by worsening input supply and financial constraints, is expected to continue into the 2004/05 marketing year. Food security calculations for Zimbabwe are severely hampered by the GOZ's lack of transparency, withholding of information about imports and national stocks, and cancellation of independent food security assessments (Ref: C and D). All estimates, except those of the GOZ, point to a significant food gap.

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Mission request  
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17. Based on the complexity and magnitude of the continuing crisis, the Ambassador believes that the GOZ has neither the resources nor the capacity to respond effectively. The Ambassador therefore exercises disaster assistance authority to declare Zimbabwe to be in a state of complex emergency, and requests continued assistance by USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance during FY 2005, as well as continued support from the office of Food for Peace and the Office of Transitional Initiatives to implement an integrated strategy to mitigate the crisis and meet humanitarian needs in Zimbabwe.

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